



**AISCAP**  
Association of Indian School Counselors  
and Allied Professionals

The National Life Skills,  
Values, School Health  
& Wellness Program



# AISCAP NEWSLETTER

National Round Table Consultation on  
School Based Counselling & Special Needs Services

2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2014



Shri Rajarshi Bhattacharya Secretary, School Education and Literacy, GOI felicitated by Ms. Ameeta Mulla Wattal, Chairperson NPSC and Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Expressions India

The **National Consultation on School Based Counselling and Special Needs Services**, a collaborative endeavour of the **Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)**, **National Progressive School Conference (NPSC)**, **Association of Indian School Counselors and Allied Professionals (AISCAP)** and **Expressions India** was organised at the **India International Centre** on **2<sup>nd</sup> August 2014**.

This has been a pioneering initiative of a large group of Government Agencies and Non-Government Auxiliary Organisations who came together in the consultative round table meet.

The consultative meet was part of the definitive action involving curriculum

designers, principals, teachers, counsellors and special needs educators for facilitation of inclusion and integration of 'all' children into existing schooling system.

**Mr. Rajarshi Bhattacharya, Secretary Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Department, Government of India** was the Chief Guest on the occasion. In his eloquent address he shifted the focus of the deliberations on the need to identify the special abilities of those that society has labelled differently abled. He reiterated the importance of this national consultation, and hoped that the recommendations and guidelines that evolved as a result of the proceedings would become

part of policy of the Government of India in the light of the ongoing educational reforms.

**Dr. Kavita Sharma, Director IIC and Former Principal, Hindu College , University of Delhi** chaired the session and gave her valuable inputs on the theme and emphasised the practical aspects of counselling and special needs in education.

**Mrs. Ameeta Mulla Wattal, Chairperson NPSC**, initiated and moderated the discussion to a focussed outcome for recommendations and **Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, Program Director, Expressions India** outlined the vision and plan that would serve as the road map for policy.

**Prof. Namita Ranganathan , Department of Education, Central Institute of Education; Mr.**

**Kuldeep Agarwal, Director, NIOS; Dr. Veera Gupta, National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA);, Mr. Puran Chand General Secretary COBSE, Mrs. Usha Chaujar, Chairpeson, AISCAP and Mrs. Usha Ram, Principal Laxman Public School** contributed their expertise and suggestions.

This was followed by comments and observations by Principals of over fifty schools across the city NCT and other state and presentations from the teams of AISCAP and NIOS.

**Mr. Vineet Joshi, Chairman CBSE**, lauded the initiative and spoke of the inclusion Cell that had been created by the CBSE to address issues of special needs and allied services in schools.



*Proceedings of the national consultation meet*

A special presentation on roadblocks faced in inclusion was presented by **Mrs. Tulika Talwar, senior special educator** and **Dr. Renu Malviya, Head of Department, Department of Education, Delhi University**. It highlighted the major challenges faced by the school, management, special educators, teachers, parents and most importantly students themselves due to lack of awareness and sensitization of various conditions within the spectrum of 'Special Needs'.



*We need to give each other the space to grow, to be ourselves, to exercise our diversity. We need to give each other space so that we may both give and receive such beautiful things as ideas, openness, dignity, joy, healing, and inclusion.*



The Post- Lunch session involved focus group discussions led by team leaders to brainstorm on curriculum modifications and provisions to be made across the developmental process of schooling and bridging the gap with higher education.

The four groups were divided into the four categories, viz; Cerebral Palsy, Autism, Intellectual Disability and Learning Disorders.

A rigorous evaluation of existing provisions, their relevance and effectiveness along with the need for further provisions were discussed amongst the groups. Each group representative presented their recommendations afterwards which was open for further discussion by rest of the members.

The session concluded with consensus guidelines from various agencies in a White Paper which would be presented to the Ministry of Human Resource Development.



*Group work in action to formulate recommendations from various target groups.*

The Summary of Recommendations received included:

1. Creation of Zonal and District Clusters for pooling resources and establishing Nodal Support Centres.
2. Pre- Service and In-Service Training for 'all' teachers – *each teacher a counselor* ;
3. Bridge Courses for teachers/ Refresher courses for teachers and counselors
4. Partnership between schools and tertiary education
5. Parent Advocacy Programmes
6. Partnership with local mental health and counseling agencies
7. Mandatory for school infrastructure and environment to be disabled friendly
8. Separation of Disability from underprivileged and other disadvantaged groups
9. Strengthening the teacher training curriculum with emphasis on special needs, mental health and counseling.
10. Upgrading and training for Special Needs Educators and absorbing them in schools on a regular basis
11. Vocationalisation of subjects for special needs in schools.

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